



Holy and Great Saturday

On Saturday, the high priests and Pharisees gathered together before Pilate and asked him to have Jesus' tomb sealed until the third day; because, as those enemies of God said, "We suspect that His disciples will come and steal His buried body by night, and then proclaim to the people that His resurrection is true, as that deceiver Himself foretold while He was yet alive; and then the last deception shall be worse than the first." After they had said these things to Pilate and received his permission, they went and sealed the tomb, and assigned a watch for security, that is guards from among the soldiers under the supervision of the high priests (Matt. 27:62-66). While commemorating the entombment of the holy Body of our Lord today, we also celebrate His dread descent with His soul, whereby He destroyed the gates and bars of Hades, and made His light to shine where only darkness had reigned (Job 38:17; Esaias 49:9; I Peter 3:18-20); death was put to death, Hades was stripped of all its captives, our first parents and all the righteous who died from the beginning of time ran to Him Whom they had awaited, and the holy angelic orders glorified God for the restoration of our fallen race.

Dismissal Hymns. Second Tone

THE noble Joseph, taking Thine immaculate Body down from the Tree, and having wrapped It in linen and pure spices, laid it for burial in a new tomb.

Glory.

WHEN Thou didst descend unto death, O Life Immortal, then didst Thou slay Hades with the lightening of Thy Divinity. And when Thou didst also raise the dead out of the nethermost depths, all the powers in the Heavens cried out: O Life-giver, Christ our God, glory be to Thee.

Both now.

UNTO the myrrh-bearing women did the Angel cry out as he stood by the grave: Myrrh oils are meet for the dead, but Christ hath proved to be a stranger to corruption.

Kontakion. Plagal of Second Tone

HE that shut up the abyss is seen to be dead, and like a mortal man, the Immortal One is wrapped in linen and myrrh, and placed in a grave. And women came to anoint Him weeping bitterly and crying out: This is the most blessed Sabbath whereon Christ, having slept, shall arise on the third day.

**† THE END OF THE † TRIODION
AND † TO OUR GOD BE GLORY.**

